Future Leaders Fellowships
UK Research and Innovation
Welcome to UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)

UK Research and Innovation, launched in April 2018, and is the new funding organisation for research and innovation in the UK.

It brings together the seven UK research councils, Innovate UK and Research England, working closely with its partner organisations in the devolved administrations.
UK Research and Innovation

We are an independent organisation with a strong voice for research and innovation, both to government and internationally.

We are principally funded through the Science Budget by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).
The numbers

- **Over £6 billion** in combined budget per year for investment in research and innovation

- **3,900** research and business grants issued every year

- **2,400** business-led collaborative projects and **over 200** Knowledge Transfer Partnerships

- **151** universities receiving research funding

- **38** institutes, laboratories, units, campuses and innovation catapults
UK Research and Innovation – Our Vision

UK Research and Innovation: benefiting everyone through knowledge, talent, and ideas.
The overall framework for our strategy

Delivering UKRI’s vision and the Government target of 2.4% of GDP spend

- Deliver economic impact
- Create social and cultural impact

Push frontiers of human knowledge and understanding

- Foundations for excellent research and innovation
- Best environment for research and innovation

- Trusted and diverse system
- Leading talent
- Global Britain
- Infrastructure

UKRI as an outstanding organisation

UK Research and Innovation
UKRI Board members

Sir John Kingman
Chair, UKRI

Sir Mark Walport
Chief Executive, UKRI

Ian Kenyon
Chief Finance Officer, UKRI

Sir Peter Bazalgette
Professor Julia Black
Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz
Lord John Browne
Professor Sir Ian Diamond
Fiona Driscoll
Professor Alice Gast

Sir Harpal Kumar
Professor Max Lu
Vivienne Parry
Mustafa Suleyman
Lord David Willetts
Professor Dame Sally Davies
Future Leaders Fellowships: An Overview
Overview of Future Leaders Fellowships

- Will grow the strong supply of talented individuals needed to ensure that UK research and innovation continues to be world class.

- Do so by attracting, developing and retaining the most promising future leaders at a known career pinch point.

- Provide seamless support across UKRI remit.

- Funding to be committed over 3 years (6 rounds), supporting ~200 individuals per year for up to 7 years (4+3).

- New funds from the National Productivity Investment Fund (~£900M).
UKRI Future Leaders Fellowships

Supporting early career researchers and innovators with outstanding potential

£857 million
550 awards
6 competitions

Next closing date 2 May 2019
What is a Future Leaders Fellowship?

Monetary award to conduct a specific project/problem and significantly enhance an individual’s career.

Dedicated time to focus on research/innovation, receiving mentoring, and enhanced training opportunities.

An award for someone who has already gained their doctorate (PhD) or equivalent experience but is still early in their career. With the potential to be an outstanding leader in their field.
Purpose of the UKRI Future Leaders Fellowships?

Supporting early career researchers and innovators with outstanding potential across the whole of UKRI remit.

To facilitate and encourage:
- interdisciplinary research & innovation
- international mobility
- part-time and flexible working
- cross-sector working
- research and innovation with and in businesses
- enhanced host support for ECRs
- diversity
Will applications that are interdisciplinary focused/business based/from incoming international talent be prioritised?

Encouraging these applications and part of the overall vision. Not mandated. One way an applicant may highlight how an FLF Fellowship will have a demonstrable impact on their career trajectory beyond what they could achieve through other grant or Fellowship schemes.

Is there an allocation ‘per council’ or a specific discipline split envisaged? Will UKRI be adding priorities for future rounds?

No. Currently broad spread of disciplines. May add ‘highlights’ or ‘steers’ in future to ensure a rounded portfolio – too early to say. These may be cover any feature of the scheme.
Clarity around career stage for candidates? Some more specific detail on the appropriate career stage of candidates applying. More information on the eligibility or suitability of applicants: choice between new lecturers or Research Fellows? More clarification around what is meant by 'Early career' given then the person specification information sometimes refers to experience that I, and others, would deem to be more advanced / from an already established researcher. It would be helpful if UKRI could outline what the typical track record of someone applying for this scheme from a non STEM disciplinary background might look like - so that Universities can make a judgement about whether or not a potential application has already reached 'research independence'. Changes in eligibility for future rounds? More information about career stage intended for Guidance for Case for Support Clarification on candidate eligibility (i.e., if they have held Marie Curie Fellowships, UKRI research grants as PI etc.). Who is the scheme ideally aimed at, high flying Post Docs/PhD students or newly appointed lecturers, a clearer steer is this for people in perm or non perm roles (like the Leverhulme Trust Early Career Fellowship, would be good. Further clarification on who the scheme is aimed at, and any additional information to help us select the best candidates for the scheme Clarification on candidate eligibility (i.e., if they have held Marie Curie Fellowships, UKRI research grants as PI etc.). Eligibility for the next rounds? What sort of person are UKRI actually looking to support through this scheme? Someone who needs to demonstrate research independence (i.e. pre-lectureship) or someone building a research group (i.e. post-lectureship)? Given that there have not been any outcomes of the scheme yet, some guidance around this would be helpful.

What do we mean by Early Career Researcher?
Early Career Researchers

Key points:

No ‘standard’ answer. Encouraging applications from the broadest spectrum of disciplinary backgrounds, and career pathways e.g. discipline hopping, industry and academia, career breaks, time in other roles. There is no tick box set of rules. Must justify in application.

If round one highlights ways in which we can better articulate this we will update the guidance. Current guidance (Person Specification: https://www.ukri.org/files/funding/lf-overview-of-the-scheme/)
Person Specification

**FLF applicants should:**

- Demonstrate broad knowledge of the area of interest, and offer a compelling vision for the excellence and importance of the proposed research or innovation.
- Take advantage of the long-term and flexible support offered, justify how the proposal would have wider influence in the field.
- Have their own original and ambitious plans / ideas, which do not significantly overlap with their proposed collaborators, or former supervisors’.
- Demonstrate the suitability of the proposed environment(s) for their research or innovation and its impact.
- Provide an approach to maximising the impact and influence of the proposed work, in the short and/or long-term. This may involve co-production of knowledge and implementation of this knowledge with the business, public sector, civil society sector or the wider community.
- Be capable of leading and developing a team or taking a leading role in their field; and show an ability to identify and maximise potential in others.
- For business applicants, have secured the backing of the business that employs them.
- For academic applicants, have secured the backing of an institution that is prepared to host them and commit to an open-ended research or innovation position for the individual at the end of the fellowship.
- Demonstrate the ability to choose and develop appropriate collaborations and networks nationally, internationally or across disciplines.
Person Specification

Experience and potential:

• Applicants must have the necessary level of skills, knowledge and experience to take forward the proposed project / programme
• Have a track record of producing challenging, original and productive research and/or innovation outputs that stands out in their field
• Demonstrate flexibility to adapt to opportunity and embrace new directions

Personal development:

• Have identified and proposed opportunities for their own development as impactful and influential research or innovation leaders. This could include time for work in other environments, international links etc., development of new skills (e.g. in policy impact or commercialisation)
• Have identified opportunities to access career development support, e.g. mentoring and professional training and development, and relevant training courses that will underpin their future career ambitions and learning. A clear programme of skills development is an essential component of this training fellowship

Skills:

• Have strong communication and interpersonal skills and aim to develop these through engagement with different audiences
• Demonstrate how the outcomes of the Fellowship will be communicated and used within and outside their immediate community.
How many applications?

- Scheme open to over 250 eligible HEIs and IROs across the Research Councils plus eligible businesses for Innovate UK.
- Aiming to maintain a good success rate (round 1 c.11%).
- Want to reduce the peer review and application effort and concentrate on fewer – but higher-quality – applications.
- Publishing success rates (normal practice across UKRI).
How many applications should a host submit?

- Unable to answer that question.

- Risk that any numerical limit is considered a target.

- Focus on quality and have asked organisations to establish effective and transparent arrangements for managing applications.
Future Demand Management?

• Hope that formal demand management will not be necessary. Continue to review the situation.

• Want to continue working with the community in managing demand for the scheme e.g. today (and future meetings) to gain feedback, and listen to suggestions.

• Already made changes e.g. Outline Proposals moved to Je-S.
Future Leaders Fellowships – Applying
UKRI FLF- is this the best outlet?

Is the applicant one of outstanding potential?

Is the award of this fellowship going to offer a step change in the career of the applicant?

Is the host organisation willing to provide significant support in terms of the opportunities and training?

Is the proposed program addressing a multifaceted, significant and difficult research or innovation problem?
Scheme Criteria

- Research and innovation excellence
- Applicant and their development
- Impact and strategic relevance
- Research and innovation environment and cost
Where to find all the information

https://www.ukri.org/funding/funding-opportunities/future-leaders-fellowships/

Key Documents
Overview of the scheme
Frequently Asked Questions
Guidance for applicants
Assessment criteria

Videos
Comms Updates
The Application Process

Five stages

• Expression of interest/Outline 2nd May JeS/Smart Survey
• Full proposal 30th May JeS
• Peer review
• Sift panel w/c 25th November
• Interview panel w/c 27 January 2020
Outline stage

- Applicant and host organisation
- A summary of the proposed research/innovation program to be proposed and a list of objectives
- Whether large capital equipment is required and whether the estimated costs of the proposal will be greater than £1.2M
Outline stage

- Submitted via JeS for HEIs and other JeS registered organisations.
- Smart-survey for businesses.
- Non competitive; allows UKRI to assess demand.
- Please help us by clearly identifying to which parts of UKRI the proposal has most relevance!
Process after outline stage

- Letters to Host organisations to confirm number of Outline proposals submitted.
- May mention to HEIs or IROs if numbers are very high
- Will contact business hosts to offer additional support in using the systems and guidance on applications.
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<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Required Documentation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full proposal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposal form</td>
<td>Letters of Support (project partner and otherwise)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Case for support</td>
<td>CV</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pathways to Impact</td>
<td>Publication list</td>
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<tr>
<td>Justification for Resources</td>
<td>Workplan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Host organisation statement</td>
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Writing a proposal- some things to consider

What activities can be carried out to ensure that the award allows the fellow to maximise their potential?

What can fellows do to ensure the fellowship has the greatest impact?

What should be planned to ensure the programme of research or innovation is performed to the highest standard?

Who should be involved to realise the questions above?
Working across multiple organisations

- Hosted by a single organisation, but can include any number of associated partners or co-hosting organisations.

- Opportunities to access additional expertise, facilities and networks of related research and development.

- Innovation within remit of scheme, allowing novel partnerships between businesses and academia within a single program.
Working with business

Business collaborations, business hosting and working collaboratively all encouraged

Please read our guidance around state aid before applying (will be updated for round three!)

Keen to speak to applicants based in or extensively collaborating with a business to advise on process, costings, etc.
Final thoughts on applications

• Read guidance carefully!
  ➢ Harmonised scheme which may not be identical to individual councils applicants may have applied to before.

• Important to address all criteria for the scheme and clearly identify why this applicant is the best possible fit.

• What is the career boost offered by this fellowship at this stage of the individuals career? What is the added value?

• This is a fellowship proposal!
Decision making process
Decision making process

• Two stage review:
  1. Written peer review by sector / discipline experts
  2. PI response to reviews
  3. Shortlisting and interview by panel of senior decision makers

• Role of the panel

• **Shortlisting**: moderate peer-review across areas (academia, industry, hybrid) and disciplines / multidisciplinarity

• **Interview**: test candidates leadership potential and the additionality of the fellowship
PI response- what to think about

- Responding is part of a reasoned discussion with the reviewers- treat it as such.

- Remember panel will be made up of generalists- write accessibly.

- Ignore scores and do not ‘play referees off against each other

- Is the last thing panels will often read- make it count!
Interview panels

• Will investigate the research and innovation within each project so be prepared

• Will ask questions related to leadership potential and development of the fellow

• Will want to see vision for the fellowship and the potential of the applicant to develop themselves and develop and lead others

• All those who reach interview will be provided feedback
## Interview process

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<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>5 min</td>
<td>Panel discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 min</td>
<td>Applicant presentation <em>The vision for my Future Leaders Fellowship</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>10 min</td>
<td><strong>Q&amp;A Research and innovation</strong> (proposed programme of work)</td>
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<td>Semi-set</td>
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<td>10 min</td>
<td><strong>Q&amp;A Leadership focus</strong> (leadership and development of leadership potential)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Set</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 min</td>
<td><strong>Q&amp;A Career development focus</strong> (added value and career benefit)</td>
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<td>Set</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 min</td>
<td>Any other questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 min</td>
<td>Thinking time and initial scoring</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>Discussion and final score</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deadline</td>
<td>Round 3</td>
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<td>Je-S/ Smart survey open for mandatory outline proposals</td>
<td>2 April 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>JeS opens for full applications</td>
<td>w/c 15 April 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mandatory outline proposal closes on JeS</td>
<td>2 May 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>JeS full application deadline</td>
<td>30 May 2019</td>
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**Projected Future Full application closing dates**

- Round Four: October 2019
- Round Five: May 2020
- Round Six: October 2020
Future Leaders Fellowships – Training and Mentoring Support
Host Support

- Supporting the fellow to establish themselves and provide a career boost

- Part of assessment criteria: “Research and Innovation Environment & Costs”
Host Support

- Support for the programme of work
- Training
- Mentoring
- Integrate the fellow within the activities of the host department
Open-ended commitment

- Required commitment from host organization for an open-ended research / innovation focused position

  - Recognising that research employers differ in their employment policies and practices
  - Expectation that fellow will be in best position to take up open-ended position prior to completion
Support from UK Research and Innovation

- Support for training activities
- Mentoring
- Cohort events
- UKRI wide activities
Future Leaders Fellowships
Thoughts after Round One
Thoughts after the first round.

– Success rate 11%.

– Quality/excellence vital. But we but also look at added value across all assessment criteria: Research & Innovation Excellence; Applicant & their Development; Impact & Strategic Relevance; Research and Innovation Environment & Costs.

– Applicants need to be clearer on why they will gain from a long-term, flexible, fellowship. Why are standard grants not optimal?

– Early Career Researchers (not established academics).

– Strong applicants considered leadership and career development.

– Host commitment crucial.
Next Steps

Developing scheme – please feedback/engage with UKRI. We are listening.

Series of community meetings (Town Halls) and webinars. See UKRI website. https://www.ukri.org/funding/funding-opportunities/future-leaders-fellowships/future-leaders-fellowships-town-hall-meeting/

Guidance for applicants on key interview topics will be published (April)

Get in touch: UKRI Future Leaders Fellowships team

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